

Lambda Letters Project

Vol. 13, No. 2 February, 2005

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Our Surprising Governor ~~#35289~~

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Lavender Library, Archives
and Cultural Exchange
Sacramento, CA

If nothing else, Governor Schwarzenegger is good theater. A lot of people in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community look at the fact that the governor is a Republican and assume he is all bad news for them. Many with HIV/AIDS think the same thing. But the governor has been surprising. It is a mistake to assume anything about this governor.

Last year Lambda Letters looked at the governor's record on signing bills. He signed most of the good LGBTI bills we were tracking. In our 2004 scorecard, he passed with 83% on LGBTI issues. Some would say, "Not bad for a Republican governor."

On the other hand, we gave him a score of just 33% on HIV/AIDS issues last year because he vetoed many good HIV/AIDS bills. Some would say, "What else could you expect from a Republican?" The governor has just released his new budget proposal. It recommends significant budget cuts for a wide array of health and social services programs. Are you assuming that HIV/AIDS programs are among those targeted for large cuts? If so, you guessed wrong.

The governor's budget actually proposes an increase of \$29.4 million in funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). This program provides much needed medications for 30,000 people with low incomes. Without ADAP, HIV medications—which can cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000 per year—would be out of reach for hundreds of low-income Californians.


Furthermore, the governor did not cut funding from any other HIV/AIDS programs. Prevention, testing and counseling, and HIV care programs have all been slated for flat-

funding in the governor's budget.

Other evidence suggests that we should not make assumptions about our interesting governor. He is an immigrant; he was born in Austria. That means he should support immigrant rights, right? Actually, we gave him a score of just 17% on People of Color issues last year because he vetoed many bills of importance to that community. Many of those bills would have helped immigrants. Go figure!

Do we understand the governor now? Do we know what he will do in the future on issues of concern to us? I don't think so. Before he became governor he led the successful effort for a bond initiative (Prop. 47) to fund after-school programs in California. Yet last year he forced the state's public schools to forego over \$2 billion in funds due them under Prop. 98. He promised that he would restore the funds in his next budget. Yet that budget again proposes withholding \$2.3 billion from schools. Worse, he proposes overturning Prop. 98 and no longer guaranteeing a certain portion of tax revenues going to public schools.

The governor has been known to change his mind about other subject areas as well. Last year he seriously proposed putting enrollment caps on most of the state's health and social services programs. That meant that if Medi-Cal already had a certain number of enrollees, no other poor people would be enrolled, no matter how needy or sick they were. Under pressure from legislators and lobby groups like Lambda Letters, the governor relented. He dropped the enrollment caps. The new budget he just released contains many draconian cuts to health and human services programs, but it does not propose enrollment caps.

What are the lessons in all this? We should not assume that either the governor or legislators cannot be persuaded to change their positions. We should determine what we need as a community, and then we should go for it. 

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Letters and Messages Collected

Nov. & Dec., 2004	17,898 letters & e-mails
In all of 2004	364,795 letters & e-mails

Dollars Spent

Nov. & Dec., 2004	\$5,704
In all of 2004	\$46,147

Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

Lambda Letters Project

Our Mission

To promote the social, economic, and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals, couples, and families; people affected by HIV/AIDS; people of color; and women. We do this by urging elected officials to enact and support legislation that accomplishes this goal.

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Have you experienced employment discrimination because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation or because of your age (40 and over), ancestry, color, creed, disability, marital status, medical condition, national origin, race, religion, or sex? Have you been denied family and medical care leave or pregnancy disability leave?

If so, you may register a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. In cases of employment discrimination, call the department at (800) 884-1684. In cases of housing discrimination, call (800) 233-3212.

The person answering the phone will schedule an appointment for you at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing Office which is closest to your home or place of employment.

Support Access to Affordable Drugs

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

A recent study by the American Association of Retired People (AARP) found that manufacturers' wholesale drug prices continue to rise. Drug prices rose 3.4% during the first three months of 2004. Inflation in that same period was just 1.2%. That means that drug prices rose at more than double the rate of inflation.

According to the AARP, the average annual rate of increase in drug prices rose from 6.9% for the 12 months ending December 2003 to 7.2% for the 12 months ending March 2004. Again, that's way above the general rate of inflation.

Consumers in the United States pay over \$48 billion in out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs annually. Recently, prescription drug spending has increased an average of 17.3% each year. Typically, US residents spend \$654 on drugs, while a resident of Britain pays only \$197, according to a recent *Time* magazine article.


News reports also estimate that Americans spend \$800 million a year on prescription drugs from Canada, where drugs are roughly 40% cheaper. Americans are being driven to buy there because of their need for affordable drugs.

AB 73 is designed to help Californians find affordable medicines. It would establish the California Rx Prescription Drug Web Site Program, and would require the State Department of Health Services to establish a Web site to provide information about sources of affordable drugs. The site would establish electronic links to certain federal and state pharmaceutical programs.

The Web site would also have links to pharmacies in Canada, England, and Ireland. These pharmacies would have to meet certain requirements designed to assure the safety and reliability of the drugs. The Web site would include price comparisons of prescription drugs from these various sources.

The bill would also encourage the state to explore lowering its own drug costs by establishing pilot projects in which cheaper drugs might be purchased from foreign sources.

Drug costs are a severe hardship for a growing number of Californians. These costs also hurt the cash-strapped state government. AB 73 takes positive steps to deal with the situation.

Please write to the Assembly Health Committee. Urge them to vote for AB 73. 

Oppose Attacks on Marriage Equality

By Shirin Buckman, Legislative Analyst

Please write the Assembly Judiciary Committee and urge them to oppose ACA 3. This bill, sponsored by Assemblymember Ray Haynes (R-Temecula), as well as SCA 1, sponsored by Bill Morrow (R-San Luis Obispo), are a threat to our civil liberties.

Both bills attempt to amend the California Constitution to confirm that marriage shall legally exist *only* between a man and a woman. Furthermore, they would take away the domestic partnership benefits that we have fought so hard to win.

By encouraging legislators to oppose these bills, you will ensure that California remains a state where there is progression, not regression, in achieving full equality for all citizens.


Our Declaration of Independence states that all people are created equal. These bills clearly state the opposite. They loudly declare that same-sex couples are secondary citizens, even though they pay taxes, are community leaders, and contribute heavily to the state economy. If passed, ACA 3 and SCA 1 will have the same, if not worse, effect as those marriage-denying initiatives passed in 12 states in the 2004 presidential election.

ACA 3 and SCA 1 are the exact same bill. They were crafted so that if ACA 3 was voted down in the Assembly, SCA 1 might have a chance in the Senate. At the time of this writing, SCA 1 awaits assignment to a committee by the Senate Rules Committee. ACA 3 has been referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

Please e-mail, call, and write your senators and assemblymembers. Urge them to vote these bills down firmly.

It is crucial to unite against this anti-civil rights movement. Reinforce your solid support of AB 19, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act. An important way to do this is to show your opposition to bills that deny marriage equality for all people.

An overwhelming outpouring of opposition to ACA 3 and SCA 1 may discourage public interest groups from placing a marriage "preservation" amendment initiative on the 2006 ballot. Please make your legislators aware that they are representing you when they vote to preserve your civil rights.

Please sign the enclosed letter in opposition to ACA 3 and return it to us for delivery to the legislature. 

Fight Monstrous Budget Cuts

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Recently Governor Schwarzenegger was interviewed by the editorial board of the *Sacramento Bee*. He told the newspaper that budget cuts in health and social services programs are designed to "starve the public sector because we don't want to feed the monster." Just who is the monster?

The governor says he won't raise income by increasing taxes, but he will cut essential health and social services for the poor. He plans to take \$2.3 billion from our already underfunded school system. He plans to cut \$450 million from the CalWORKS program, which provides financial help and training to help low-income parents enter the workforce. He plans to increase premiums for poor people on Medi-Cal and he plans to shift more aged blind and disabled people into HMOs, many of which provide inadequate services.

The governor also would cut welfare grants from \$723 a month to \$676. And he would freeze Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments to the aged, blind, and disabled at \$812 per month for individuals. Honestly, could *you* live on \$823 per month, much less \$676 per month?

He also plans to cut the state's support of wages of home healthcare workers by about one third. These people provide essential care in the home to poor and disabled people.

Are innocent children monsters? Are people too poor to afford health insurance monsters? Are the aged blind and disabled monsters? Are the healthcare workers who toil to care for these people, and who do so on low wages, monsters? Are the people in CalWORKS who are struggling to gain the skills needed to find gainful employment monsters? I don't think so.

If they are not the monsters in this situation, then who is? I will let you be the judge. If you feel as I do, please write to the Assembly and urge them to oppose monstrous cuts to the health and social services programs proposed by the governor. ✉

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Stop the Inhumane Practice of Human Trafficking

By Kathleen Watanabe, LLP Analyst

California is experiencing a growing problem of human trafficking—a form of slavery that uses force, fraud, and coercion to compel individuals to work in the sex industry or forced labor, which may include domestic labor, factory work, work in hotels or restaurants, agricultural work, peddling, or begging.

The problem of human trafficking has reached epic proportions. It is growing faster than any other criminal industry in the world. According to the federal government, an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 people are trafficked into this country each year. Women and children are the majority of trafficking victims. Children as young as four are reportedly being sold into slavery, often for sexual purposes. In 2001 the United States Department of Justice concluded that between 300,000 and 400,000 American children are victims of sexual exploitation every year.

According to activists and government agencies, the foreign women who are the victims of trafficking are often the victims of organized crime groups. These groups recruit them under false pretenses, bring them here illegally and force them into prostitution to pay off outrageous debts. They are then often subjected to imprisonment, beatings, rapes, and threats of being reported to immigration authorities. These women and children come from all over the world—particularly Asia, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe.

To address this growing problem, Assemblymember Sally Lieber (D-Mountain View) has introduced AB 22. This bill would establish the felonious crime of human trafficking for forced labor or services and the trafficking of a minors for sexual servitude. The bill would also enhance penalties when kidnapping, sexual abuse, or an attempt to kill the victim occurs. The bill would require restitution to these victims.

AB 22 is currently in the Assembly Committee on Public Safety. Please write the members of that committee and urge them to support this important bill. In addition, write to your individual assemblymembers and request their support.

It is essential that California provide national leadership to create model legislation that addresses trafficking as a human rights issue, rather than solely a criminal or immigration issue. AB 22 does that. It deserves your support. The lives and well-being of tens of thousands of innocent victims depend on your help. Human trafficking is truly a human tragedy. It robs innocent people of their dignity and causes deep trauma and suffering. Please support AB 22. ✉

name

address

city, state, zip

February 15, 2005

The Hon. Dave Jones
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Jones:

The governor recently told the editorial board of the Sacramento Bee that his proposed budget cuts in health and social services programs are designed to "starve the public sector because we don't want to feed the monster." Just who is the monster?

The governor says he won't raise income by increasing taxes. But he will cut essential health and social services for the poor. He plans to take \$2.3 billion from our already underfunded school system. He plans to cut \$450 million from the CalWORKS program, which provides financial help and training to help low-income parents enter the workforce. He plans to increase premiums for poor people in Medi-Cal and he plans to shift more aged, blind, and disabled people into HMOs. Many of these HMOs provide inadequate services.

The governor also would cut welfare grants from \$723 a month to \$676. And he would freeze Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments to the aged, blind and disabled at \$812 per month for individuals. Tell me honestly, could you live on \$823 per month, much less \$676 per month? He also plans to cut the state's support of the wages of home healthcare workers by about one-third. These people provide essential care in the home to poor and disabled people.

Are innocent children monsters? Are people too poor to afford health insurance monsters? Are the aged, blind, and disabled monsters? Are the healthcare workers who toil to care for these people, and who do so on low wages, monsters? Are the people in CalWORKS, who are struggling to gain the skills needed to find gainful employment, monsters? I don't think so.

I think the cuts to health and social service programs proposed by the governor are monstrous. Please oppose them with all your might and with all your legislative skills.

Sincerely,

Fight Monstrous Budget Cuts

By Anna Wilson, Staff Writer

San Francisco's budget cuts are monstrous. They are a direct result of the city's fiscal crisis, which began in 1976 when the city's revenues fell sharply. Since then, the city has been forced to cut its budget by more than 20 percent. The cuts have been made in every area of the city's operations, from police and fire to education and social services. The cuts have been made in a way that has caused the city's services to deteriorate. The city's police force has been reduced by 10 percent, and its fire department by 15 percent. The city's education system has been cut by 20 percent, and its social services by 25 percent. The cuts have been made in a way that has caused the city's services to deteriorate.

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Stop the Inhumane Practice of Human Trafficking

By Anna Wilson, Staff Writer

Human trafficking is a global problem that affects millions of people every year. It is the illegal trade of people, often for the purpose of forced labor or sexual exploitation. The practice is inhumane and degrading, and it is a violation of human rights. It is a crime that is often overlooked, but it is one that must be stopped.

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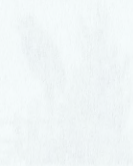
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city, state, zip

February 15, 2005

The Hon.Dave Jones
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Jones:

I urge you to vote for AB 73 when it comes before you in the Assembly Health Committee. This bill would establish the California Rx Prescription Drug Web Site Program. The site would provide information to California residents about options for obtaining prescription drugs at affordable prices. It would provide information about -- and establish electronic links to -- certain federal and state pharmaceutical programs, as well as pharmacies located in Canada, England, and Ireland that meet specified requirements.

Drug prices continue to skyrocket. A recent study by the American Association of Retired People (AARP) finds manufacturers' wholesale drug prices continue to rise. Drug prices rose 3.4% during the first three months of 2004. Inflation in that same period was just 1.2%. Drug prices rose at more than double the rate of inflation.

According to the AARP, the average annual rate of increase in drug prices rose from 6.9% for the 12 months ending December 2003 to 7.2% for the 12 months ending March 2004. Again, that's way above the general rate of inflation.

Recently, prescription drug spending has increased an average of 17.3% each year. Typically, United States residents spend \$654 on drugs per year, while a resident in Britain pays only \$197.

California residents need relief. This is especially important because five to six million Californians have no health insurance to help them pay for medications. AB 73 is an important step towards solving this problem. It would help people find the most affordable source of medicines they could depend on. Please vote for AB 73.

Sincerely,

February 12, 2003

The Honorable Jones
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Jones:

I urge you to vote for AB 73 when it comes before you in the Assembly Health Committee. This bill would establish the California Rx Prescription Drug Watch Program. The bill would provide information to California residents about options for obtaining prescription drugs at affordable prices. It would provide information about -- and establish electronic links to -- certain federal and state pharmacy rebate programs, as well as pharmacies located in Canada, England, and Ireland that accept specified prescriptions.

Drug prices continue to skyrocket. A recent study by the American Association of People's (AARP) finds manufacturers' wholesale drug prices continue to rise. Drug prices rose 3.4% during the first three months of 2004, but in the same period last year U.S. drug prices rose at more than double the rate of inflation.

According to the AARP, the average annual rate of increase in drug prices rose from 0.9% in the 12 months ending December 2003 to 7.2% for the 12 months ending March 2004. Again, that's way above the general rate of inflation.

Recently, prescription drug spending has increased at more than 17% each year. Currently, United States residents spend \$634 on drugs per year, while a resident in Britain pays only \$187.

California residents need relief. This is especially important because just to the million Californians have no health insurance to help them pay for medical care. AB 73 is an important step towards solving this problem. It would help people find the most affordable source of medicines they could obtain on. Please vote for AB 73.

Sincerely,

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address

city, state, zip

February 15, 2005

The Hon.Dave Jones
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Jones:

Please ensure that ACA 3, introduced by Assemblymember Ray Haynes (R-Temecula), does not get approved. If passed, ACA 3 would amend the California Constitution to state that marriage shall only legally exist between a man and a woman. Furthermore, this bill seeks to void domestic partnership benefits, which people have fought so long and hard to win. I appreciate the Assembly's steadfast efforts advancing equal rights in California. It is for this reason that I oppose ACA 3.

I want California to be a state where all citizens share the same benefits and responsibilities. Therefore, it is important to me that ACA 3 does not have the slightest potential to become law. Instead, please support AB 19, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act. This bill affords marriage equality for all people. AB 19 also ensures that religious institutions can choose, or refuse, to marry couples without government regulation.

ACA 3 loudly declares that gays and lesbians are second-class citizens. Please encourage your colleagues in the Judiciary Committee to kill this bill. I also request that you and your fellow committee members approve AB 19.

Sincerely,

February 15, 1995

The Hon. Dave Jones
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Jones:

Please ensure that ACA 3, introduced by Assemblymember Ray Hyman (R-Tulare), does not get approved. If passed, ACA 3 would amend the California Constitution to state that marriage shall only legally exist between a man and a woman. Furthermore, this bill seeks to void domestic partnership benefits, which people have fought so long and hard to win. I oppose the Assembly's steadfast effort to advance equal rights in California. It is for this reason that I oppose ACA 3.

I want California to be a state where all citizens share the same basic rights and responsibilities. Therefore, it is important to me that ACA 3 does not have the slightest potential to become law. Instead, please support AB 19, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act. This bill affords marriage equality for all people. AB 19 also ensures that religious institutions can choose, or refuse, to marry couples without government regulation.

ACA 3 badly declares that gays and lesbians are second-class citizens. Please encourage your colleagues in the Judiciary Committee to kill this bill. I also request that you and your fellow committee members approve AB 19.

Sincerely,

February Legislative Update

name

address

city, state, zip

February 15, 2005

The Hon. Mark Leno
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Leno:

Please support AB 22, which will help combat human trafficking, a serious and growing problem in California. Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Through the use of violence, threats, and coercion, enslaved persons may be forced to work in the sex trade, domestic labor, factories, hotels or restaurants, agriculture, peddling, or begging.

Most trafficking victims are women and children. Children as young as four are being sold into slavery, often for sexual purposes. Foreign women are often the victims of organized crime groups who recruit them under false pretenses, bring them to the US illegally, and force them into prostitution to pay off outrageous debts. They are then often subjected to imprisonment, beatings, rapes, and threats of being reported to immigration authorities.

AB 22 would establish the crime of human trafficking for forced labor or services and the trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude as felonies. The bill would also enhance penalties when kidnapping, sexual abuse, or an attempt to kill the victim has been employed. The bill would also require restitution to these victims.

I strongly urge you to support this important bill. It is essential that California provides national leadership to create model legislation that addresses trafficking as a human rights issue, rather than solely as a criminal or immigration issue that does not protect the rights of victims.

More importantly, the lives and well-being of tens of thousands of innocent victims depend on your help. Human trafficking is truly a human tragedy which robs innocent people of their dignity and causes deep trauma and suffering. Please support AB 22.

Sincerely,

February 12, 1992

The Honorable
The California State Legislature
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember:

Please support AB 32, which will address human trafficking, a serious and growing problem in California. Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Through the use of violence, threats, and coercion, trafficked persons may be forced to work in the sex trade, domestic labor, factories, farms or commercial agriculture, or beggary.

Most trafficking victims are women and children. Children as young as four are being sold into slavery, often for sexual purposes. Foreign women are often the victims of organized crime groups who recruit them under false promises, bring them to the U.S. illegally, and force them into prostitution to pay off outrageous debts. They are then often subjected to imprisonment, beatings, rape, and threats of being reported to immigration authorities.

AB 32 would establish the crime of human trafficking for forced labor or services and the trafficking of a minor for sexual services as follows. The bill would also enhance penalties when kidnapping, sexual abuse, or an attempt to kill the victim has been employed. The bill would also require restitution to these victims.

I strongly urge you to support this important bill. It is essential that California provide national leadership to create federal legislation that addresses trafficking as a human rights issue, rather than solely as a criminal or immigration issue that does not protect the rights of victims.

More importantly, the lives and well-being of tens of thousands of innocent victims depend on your help. Human trafficking is truly a human tragedy. Help these innocent people of their dignity and ensure their future and suffering. Please support AB 32.

Sincerely,

February Legislative Update

The legislative session is well underway, and many bills have been introduced. All proposed bills have to be sent to the Legislative Counsel's office for them to put the bill's concept into proper legal wording. All requests for wording had to be submitted to the Legislative Counsel's office no later than January 21. Once the bill wording is created, the bill must be actually introduced no later than February 18. Any bill missing either of these deadlines cannot be introduced this year.

Once a bill is introduced, it is sent to a policy committee for that committee to determine if it makes sense from a policy point of view. The Rules Committee in each house determines which policy committee(s) should hear and vote on a bill. Bills cannot have a hearing in a policy committee until at least 30 days from the day on which they were introduced.

Here is a list of the bills we are tracking at this time.

HIV/AIDS Issues

AB 73 (Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To establish the California Rx Prescription Drug Web Site Program, which would provide information to California residents about options for obtaining prescription drugs at affordable prices. This bill would require the Web site, at a minimum, to provide information about—and establish electronic links to—certain federal, state, and pharmaceutical programs, and pharmacies that are located in Canada, England, and Ireland that meet specified requirements.

Status: Referred first to Assembly Health Committee and then to Assembly Business and Professions Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

LGBTI Issues

AB 12 (Chuck Devore, R-Irvine)

Purpose: To provide that real property (such as a home) may be transferred to a beneficiary upon the death of the owner by recording, prior to the owner's death, a beneficiary deed signed by the owner of the property interest designating a beneficiary. Property transferred this way would not have to go through the long, expensive probate process.

Status: Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support. This bill could benefit domestic partners who choose not to register with the state.

AB 19 (Mark Leno, D-San Francisco)

Purpose: To allow same-sex couples to obtain marriage

licenses in California and to establish that no clergy or religious organization can be required to solemnize any marriage to which they have a religious objection.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

ACA 3 (Ray Haynes, R-Temecula)

Purpose: To amend the state constitution to ban same-sex marriage permanently in California and to take away the benefits that domestic partners have obtained over the past few years. This bill would also prohibit the granting of marriage-like benefits to them in the future.

Status: Introduced. May be referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee. **LLP Position:** Oppose.

SCA 1 (Bill Morrow, R-San Juan Capistrano)

Purpose: To amend the state constitution to ban same-sex marriage permanently in California and to take away the benefits that domestic partners have obtained over the past few years. This bill would also prohibit the granting of marriage-like benefits to them in the future.

Status: May be referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. **LLP Position:** Oppose.

People of Color Issues

AB 13 (Jackie Goldberg, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To prohibit, with certain exceptions, public schools from using the name "Redskins" as a school or team mascot, name, or nickname.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Education Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 15 (Jerome Horton, D-Inglewood)

Purpose: To encourage schools to include a discussion of the contributions of Filipinos to the war effort during World War II.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Education Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 22 (Sally Lieber, D-San Jose)

Purpose: To establish the crime of trafficking of a person for forced labor or services and the crime of trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, both punishable as felonies. This bill would also require restitution to trafficking victims, and would require the development of a training program for peace officers on the subject of human trafficking. It would also require the Victim's Compensation and Government Claims Board to oversee local shelters for human trafficking victims. It would also require the Attorney General to make fighting human trafficking a high priority.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

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Legislative Update

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AB 41 (Leland Yee, D-San Francisco)

Purpose: To establish the crime of trafficking of a person for forced labor or services and the crime of trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, both punishable as felonies. This bill would also require restitution to trafficking victims.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 74 (Mike Gordon, D-El Segundo)

Purpose: To establish the California Rx Prescription Telephone Drug Hotline, which would provide information to consumers and health care providers about options for obtaining prescription drugs at affordable prices. People would call a low-cost (maximum 50 cents) toll phone number.

Status: Referred first to the Assembly Health Committee then the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support if amended to make the hotline available through a toll-free number.

AB 75 (Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To establish the California Rx Plus State Pharmacy Assistance Program, which would provide low-cost drugs to low-income Californians. This bill would authorize the state to negotiate drug rebate agreements with drug manufacturers to provide for program drug discounts. Would authorize any licensed pharmacy or drug manufacturer to provide services under the program.

Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee and then the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Watch while we resolve concerns about the rebates.

AB 76 (Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To establish the Office of Pharmaceutical Purchasing within the California Health and Human Services Agency with authority and duties to purchase prescription drugs for state agencies. This bill would authorize the office to negotiate the lowest prices possible for prescription drugs. **Status:** Referred to the Assembly Health Committee then the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Watch over concerns whether this is the most efficient way to reduce costs and also assure that all necessary medications are available to patients.

AB 77 (Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To establish a pilot project requiring the Department of Corrections to contract with outside agencies to provide healthcare services, including medications, to prison inmates. The purpose of the pilot project would be to see if it would reduce the department's costs.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Public Safety Committee then the Assembly Health Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 79 (Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills)

Purpose: To enact laws to achieve statewide uniformity in lending.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Watch.

ACA 6 (Mark Wyland, R-Vista)

Purpose: To amend the state constitution to prohibit the state from issuing any driver's license or state identification card, providing in-state tuition or fees for postsecondary education, granting any voting privileges, or providing any health, social, or other state or local public benefit to any person who is neither a citizen of the United States nor any alien lawfully present in the United States, unless the privilege, service, or the benefit is required by federal law.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Oppose.

ACR 3 (Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell)

Purpose: To proclaim May 2-8, 2005, as California Holocaust Memorial Week and urge Californians to observe these days of remembrance for the victims of the Holocaust in an appropriate manner.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

AJR 1 (Rudy Bermudez, D-Bellflower)

Purpose: To memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to urge the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee

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and the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor Dr. Dalip S. Saund, an outstanding immigrant from India. This bill would encourage Californians to celebrate his birthday each year.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

AJR 2 (Noreen Evans, D-Santa Rosa)

Purpose: To memorialize the President and the Congress of the United States to honor the contributions of Filipino-American war veterans and direct the federal government to immediately pay promised veterans' benefits as the first order of business of the 109th Congress.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

SB 19 (Deborah Ortiz, D-Sacramento)

Purpose: To establish the California Pharmacy Assistance Program (Cal Rx). This bill would require the program to negotiate drug rebates with drug manufacturers in order to provide low-cost drugs to people on limited incomes but who have too much income to qualify for Medi-Cal. The program may be run by the state or a third-party vendor. This bill would establish a program for pharmacists or drug manufacturers to sell discounted drugs to California Rx participants. **Status:** Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

SB 23 (Carole Migden, D-San Francisco)

Purpose: To require the Employment Development Department to send informational brochures on the Healthy Families and Medi-Cal programs to employers for distribution to their employees. This bill would establish a system to allow employees to have the family contribution payments for healthcare coverage under the Healthy Families Program deducted from the employee's pay and transmitted to the state. Would require the state to do outreach and marketing on the Healthy families program and Medi-Cal to enroll more qualified participants.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

SB 24 (Deborah Ortiz, D-Sacramento)

Purpose: To require each private hospital to develop a written reduced-cost, charity care policy and application form and to provide these to patients. This bill would also limit debt collection activities of the hospital during the first 150 days after discharge of the patient.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

SB 26 (Dennis Hollingsworth, R-Temecula)

Purpose: To reduce state income taxes, effective January 1, 2003. This bill would eliminate them entirely beginning January 1, 2007.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Oppose. This bill would devastate the state's public health and social services programs.

Don't Let THEM Change OUR Constitution!

The Elections Committee of the County of Orange (ECCO) is a **combined Federal and State Political Action Committee** that champions issues important to the GLBT community.

Join us as we financially assist federal and state representatives, candidates, and organizations from Orange County and Long Beach that will defend the U.S. Constitution from the Federal Marriage Amendment.

ECCO supports the Lambda Letters Project

ECCO is a non-partisan Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, HIV/AIDS, and Women's Political Action Committee.

www.eccopac.org



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This newsletter printed on recycled paper

Legislative Update

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Women's Issues

AB 8 (Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell)

Purpose: To require most health insurance plans to provide a minimum of 48 hours of inpatient care for a mastectomy and 24 hours of inpatient care for a lymph node dissection for the treatment of breast cancer, unless the physician, surgeon, and patient determine that a shorter period of inpatient care is appropriate. The bill would also require coverage to be provided for a follow-up visit with a licensed healthcare professional within 48 hours of the patient's discharge from inpatient care.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Health Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 21 (Lloyd Levine, D-Van Nuys)

Purpose: To prohibit a pharmacist from declining to dispense a contraceptive or emergency contraceptive.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 59 (Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell)

Purpose: To provide significant sentence enhancements for domestic violence in the presence of a child under the age of 18.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

AB 70 (Bill Maze, R-Visalia)

Purpose: To require the Department of Motor Vehicles to provide a new set of license plates to a registered owner of a vehicle who provides certain evidence of having been the victim of rape or sexual battery.

Status: Referred to Assembly Transportation Committee. No hearing date set yet. **LLP Position:** Support.

ACR 2 (Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell)


Purpose: To proclaim the month of October 2005 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Status: Introduced. **LLP Position:** Support.

AJR 3 (Rebecca Cohn, D-Campbell)

Purpose: To petition the Congress and the President of the United States to protect and uphold the intent and substance of the United States Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, relating to reproductive rights, and to encourage all Americans to participate in the national celebration, "The March for Women's Lives," in recognition of that decision's historic importance in promoting women's rights.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Awaiting a final vote on the Assembly floor.

LLP Position: Support. 

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